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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/684,917	10/14/2003	Daniel John Smith	1171/39464B/99B-CIP	3561

279 7590 03/22/2007
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EXAMINER

PATEL, NIHIR B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3772

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	03/22/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/684,917	Applicant(s) SMITH ET AL.	
	Examiner Nihir Patel	Art Unit 3772	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01.11.2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 and 8-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-7, 11, 12 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to the double patenting rejection (**6,969,431 in view of Makin; application 10/649,938 in view of Makin; and application 10/622,755 in view of Makin**) have been fully considered and are persuasive. The double patenting rejection has been withdrawn.
2. The indicated allowability of claims 8-11 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Nakamura (JP 11323899 A). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.
3. The terminal disclaimer filed on December 29th, 2006 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of October 14th, 2003 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.
5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:
 1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
 2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
 3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.

4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.
6. Claims 1-3 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura (JP 11323899 A) in view of Makin (US 4,686,354).
7. As to claim 1, Nakamura substantially discloses an apparatus that comprises a conduit 27 (see picture on cover) including heating means 38 (see English translation) located within the conduit (see picture on cover), the heating means comprising an elongate heating element (see picture on cover) covered partially with an outer hydrophilic layer 34 (the hydrophilic fibers is defined as a layer), there being no means for direct supply of water or fluid to the hydrophilic layer from outside the conduit, but does not disclose an inner electrical insulating layer. Makin discloses an apparatus that does provide an electrical insulating layer. Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Nakamura's invention by providing an electrical insulating layer as taught by Makin in order to insulate the inner heating element from the rest of the system.
8. As to claim 2, Nakamura substantially discloses an apparatus wherein the hydrophilic layer is formed so as to absorb water due to its structure (see English translation).
9. As to claim 3, Nakamura substantially discloses an apparatus wherein the heating means lies freely in the conduit to settle over at least some of its length at low points in the conduit where condensed water vapor may collect (see English translation).
10. As to claims 8-10, Nakamura substantially discloses the claimed invention except for the hydrophilic layer being in a braided sheath. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to provide a hydrophilic layer in a braided sheath, since the applicant has not disclosed that having a hydrophilic layer in a braided sheath solves any stated problem or is for any

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particular purpose and it appears that the invention would have performed equally well with the hydrophilic layers not being in braided sheath instead in a circular fashion as shown in Nakamura.

Allowable Subject Matter

11. Claims **4-7, 11 and 12** are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nihir Patel whose telephone number is (571) 272-4803. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30 to 4:30 every other Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patricia Bianco can be reached on (571) 272-4940. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

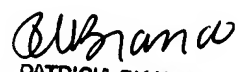
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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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Nihir Patel


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SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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3/19/09